

Message Text

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46

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 EA-06 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 /074 W

----- 033258

R 131545Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6690

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 0786

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BC

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF BOTSWANA CLIMATE TOWARDS U.S. --

FAIR AND MODERATE

REF: USIA 10677 CIRCULAR

USIA FOR IAA AND IOR

1. THE IMAGE OF U.S. STRENGTH CARRIED IN THE LIMITED BOTSWANA MEDIA IS OF A POWERFUL NATION WHICH HAS SO FAR BEEN HELPFUL TO BOTSWANA INTERNALLY BUT LESS THAN FULLY RESPONSIVE TO BOTSWANA'S PERCEPTIONS OF ACTIONS NEEDED IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. THERE IS CONTINUED RESPECT FOR THE U.S., ITS IDEALS, POWER AND INFLUENCE WORLDWIDE.

2. DEFENSE COMMITMENTS AND EAST-WEST DETENTE ARE NOT ISSUES OF GREAT CONCERN HERE, EXCEPT AS IN THE CASE OF RECENT NEWS STORIES OF SALES BY SOME NATO COUNTRIES TO SOUTH AFRICA WHEN THEY IMPINGE ON REGIONAL OR NATIONAL INTERESTS.

3. ANY REAPPRAISAL OF POLICY HERE HAS NOT BEEN A RESULT OF "CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF THE U.S. AFTER INDOCHINA", BUT RATHER
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A RESULT OF CHANGING CONDITIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE

ALTERED PERCEPTIONS OF BOTSWANA'S ROLE IN RESPONSE TO THE NEW SITUATION. BOTSWANA SEES ITSELF AS PLAYING AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE "DECOLONIZING" AND ELIMINATING RACIAL OPPRESSION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, ALONG WITH OTHER AFRICAN NATIONS, WHICH ARE ACTIVELY NON-ALIGNED OR EVEN ANTI-U.S. IN CASE OF INDOCHINA UN ACTIONS. GIVEN BOTSWANA RESPECT FOR U.S. STRENGTH AND HELP, ITS UN POSTURE ON INDOCHINA HAS PLACED THE GOVERNMENT IN A SOMEWHAT TICKLISH SITUATION. BOTSWANA'S POST-VIETNAM RESPONSE SO FAR HAS BEEN TO DOWNPLAY INDOCHINA IN THE MEDIA, WHILE MOVING SLIGHTLY CLOSER TO MID-ROAD OAU AND NON-ALIGNED POSITIONS ON OTHER INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS.

4. IN SUMMARY, BOTSWANA'S ATTITUDES TOWARD THE UNITED STATES HAVE NOT BEEN AFFECTED DIRECTLY BY THE INDOCHINA SITUATION.
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